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**Mayor Reed Announces Comprehensive Strategic Plan  
to Combat Gang Activity**

*Encourages Community Involvement to Reduce Youth Violence*

*SAN JOSE* – After hosting numerous community forums and receiving input from more than 1,000 residents, Mayor Chuck Reed has released the Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force Strategic Work Plan 2008-2011. Entitled "Action Collaboration Transformation (ACT)," the work plan is scheduled for adoption by the San José City Council at its 7 p.m. evening session on Tuesday September 23.

"We will work together to reclaim our youth and reconnect them to schools, to their families, and to the broader community," said Mayor Chuck Reed. "By working together, we can prevent young people from joining gangs, reclaim those who have gotten into the gang life, and bring them into our community as productive and contributing members, while ensuring that all of our neighborhoods remain safe."

Since Mayor Reed took office in 2007, funding for gang prevention and intervention has increased to an all-time high of \$4 million – a 33 percent increase and the first the program has seen since 1999. The Strategic Work Plan offers a comprehensive three-year strategy to reduce gang violence throughout the city while promoting positive alternatives for youth. Responding to the changing needs of residents, the plan will expand community engagement, enhance partnerships with the faith-based and private sector communities, as well as increase prevention services targeting children as young as six and girls and young women.

"Strategic, comprehensive planning is an absolute requirement for any California community that seeks to reduce gang and youth violence, and the City of San Jose has embraced this necessity for 16 years," said Paul Seave, Director of Gang and Youth Violence Policy for the Office of Governor Schwarzenegger. "The Strategic Work Plan recently drafted by the Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force continues this tradition - recognizing the complex and changing nature of gang activity, and proposing detailed, coherent responses under a strategic and comprehensive approach."

The plan sets out to increase communication between community-based organizations, schools, and city and county agencies; to help parents and neighbors know what services and resources are available; and to hold youth accountable for their actions.

With a focus on increasing the involvement of the community, the Strategic Work Plan implements five guiding principles that influenced the development of goals and strategies:

- Guiding Principles:**
1. We value our youth.
  2. We cannot arrest our way out of this problem.
  3. We will address this community challenge with a community response.
  4. We will hold our youth accountable for their actions and assist them to get back on the right path.
  5. We will not give up on any youth and are committed to facilitating personal transformation.

The process for developing the new Strategic Work Plan involved unprecedented community outreach including five Town Hall Meetings hosted by Mayor Reed and attended by hundreds of residents. The broad outreach process echoes the theme of the new Strategic Work Plan, encouraging collaborative partnerships with all areas of the City and following input received from the community.

“The success of our public safety efforts depends largely on community involvement,” said Councilmember Madison Nguyen, who serves as a member of the Mayor’s Gang Prevention Task Force. “This plan aims to develop programs that will fit our culturally diverse communities and create a uniform message of anti-violence.”

To track the progress of the Strategic Work Plan and adapt to changing needs, the Task Force will monitor data trends that include the number of gang-related violent crimes, high school drop out rates, and juvenile arrests for violent crimes, drug offenses, and property crimes. Additional indicators will be developed in partnership with the San José Police Department, County of Santa Clara, and local school districts.

“The Strategic Work Plan will serve individuals in San José, assist the community as a whole, and inspire others throughout the state and the nation,” said John A. Calhoun, administrator for California’s 13-City Gang Prevention Network for the National League of Cities. “The City of San José has pioneered the belief that enforcement, prevention and intervention must be blended – that nothing will change unless everyone takes responsibility, from parents and police to schools, businesses and the faith community.”

Since inception in 1991 under former Mayor Susan Hammer, the Mayor’s Gang Prevention Task Force has brought together law enforcement, city and county staff, educators, and community stakeholders to collaborate and respond to the changing community needs. The nationally recognized task force program is being replicated by cities throughout California.

“After reviewing the plan, I was pleased to see that the Mayor’s Gang Prevention Task Force is continuing its efforts to promote safety and healthy lifestyles for the youth and families of San José,” said Dick De La Rosa, former Gang Policy Manager under former Mayor Susan Hammer. “It is necessary for any city that wants to impact gang violence to work as a true collaborative. This collaborative must have the ability to define current issues and provide an assessment tool that engages the community and its stakeholders. It is imperative that all stakeholders work together, leveraging resources and dollars making sure that services are

delivered and assessed in a comprehensive plan that promotes the safety and welfare of our city. I am convinced that the plan reflects the above statement.”

Last year, at Mayor Reed’s recommendation, the City Council added \$1 million in one-time funding to address urgent needs and extend services. In his 2008 March Budget Message, which was unanimously adopted by the City Council, the Mayor called for an additional \$1 million per year for the task force to carry out its critical work of preventing kids from joining gangs, intervening with those who have gotten into gangs, and suppressing gang violence.

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